Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly Newscast

October 18th, 2013

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level

- to increase vocabulary among learners

- to increase knowledge of news stories

- to provide a self-study tool, as well as an ESL classroom resource

www.alberta.ca

http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/

News story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Choose the group of synonyms (words with similar meaning) that best match each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word from the story	Related words
	1) federal	a) perfectly in detail
	2) in honour	b) mistreatment online online teasing
	3) exactly	c) must demand
	4) cyber-bullying	d) central for the whole country
	5) reduce	e) sold separately not packaged together
	6) require	f) decrease make less
	7) unbundled	g) to show respect to remember

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

speech from the throne – A speech usually given by the governor general to explain the government's plans for the next year.

behind bars – in jail

wireless roaming costs – price to use the internet or data on your cell phone

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are true or false. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. _____ The government is planning new laws to protect animals that work with police.
2. _____ "Quanto's law" was named after the police dog killed in Edmonton in September.
3. _____ The speech from the throne was on Tuesday.
4. _____ The government wants to introduce a law about cyber-bullying.
5. _____ The speech mentioned requiring cable companies to bundle their TV channels.
6. _____ A new session of parliament begins with the speech from the throne.

Discussion Questions

What do you think the federal government should focus on right now? Do you agree there need to be more laws to protect police animals? Do you agree that dangerous criminals should stay in jail longer?

News story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

deadline (the last possible day to do something)	**agreement** (accepted plan)
avoid (prevent from happening)	**default** (unable to pay)
borrow (to use for a short time then return)	**demands** (requirements)
de-fund (to stop giving money to something/someone)	**debt** (money owed)

1. The _____ to hand in my homework assignment is Friday at noon.
2. I try to _____ doing homework on the weekend, so I do all my work on Friday afternoon.
3. Last month, my sister had to _____ money from me to pay an unexpected bill. She paid back her _____ to me after she got her pay cheque.
4. Many university programs have been _____ by the Alberta government.
5. If you _____ on your loan or bills, the company will charge you interest.
6. We made an _____ to meet at the mall at noon.
7. A government listens to the _____ of the people and then decides what is possible to do.

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. An agreement was reached in the U.S. Congress Wednesday, right before the _____.	a) deadline. b) the government shutdown.
2. Because of the agreement, a debt default was avoided and the U.S. government _____.	a) shutdown for 16 days. b) reopened after a 16-day shutdown.
3. The agreement means the U.S. government will be allowed to _____.	a) avoid borrowing money. b) keep borrowing money.
4. Without this agreement the U.S. government would not be able to _____.	a) pay its bills. b) pay for Obamacare.
5. The U.S. government will remain open at least until _____.	a) early in 2014. b) another agreement is reached.
6. The Republicans wanted funding to Obamacare to be_____, but they failed.	a) continued b) stopped

Discussion Questions

If the government closed down in Alberta, what would be the biggest problems?

News story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Match the words with their definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word	Definition
	1. eat out	1. laws in a province or the country
	2. obese	2. a group of related stores or restaurants, usually with the same name in many places
	3. overweight	3. eat in a restaurant
	4. legislation	4. when a person is heavy enough to have negative health problems
	5. chain	5. show a public piece of information
	6. post	6. when a person is above the normal weight
	7. calories	7. the amount of energy food produces in the human body

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Read and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. What reason does the newsreader give as to why many people eat out?

2. *What percentage of Albertans is overweight or obese?*

3. Which provincial government is bringing in new laws to make chain restaurants put the

    amount of calories in a meal on the menu?

4. Why might putting calories on menus help consumers?

5. When is the government of Alberta planning to bring in similar changes?

Discussion Questions Do you eat out in restaurants often? How are restaurants different in Canada and your home country? Is eating in restaurants good for your health?

Language Focus

Identifying the simple future tense and its use

Future tense – we use the future tense when we want to explain what we think will happen in the future, tomorrow, next week, next year.

Forming the future tense:
1. Will + verb (in base form)
The future tense is used in the following situations:
- A decision at the moment of speaking:

  A: I'm cold.

  B: I'll close the window.
- Prediction based on opinion:

  I think _____ will win in the next election.
- A future fact:

  The sun will rise at 8:15am.
- Promises / requests / refusal / willingness:

  I'll help you with your homework.

  Will you give me a hand?

2. We can use the present continuous to express a plan for the future
Am/is/are + verb ending in -ing

  I am studying English tonight after class.

3. We can use to "be + going to" so show a plan already made for the future
Am/is/are + going to + verb (in base form)
- We use "be going to" to express a plan or a prediction.

  I am going to study tonight.

  He is going to watch a movie.

  We are going to go to the store.

Listen to the first story again.
Can you hear the future tense? Why is the future tense being used?

Transcripts of Weekly News Stories

	OCTOBER 18TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, this is Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for October 18th.	0:00
Story 1	The federal government is planning new laws to protect animals that work with police. In Wednesday's speech from the throne, the government said it will introduce "Quanto's Law" in honour of the police dog that was killed in Edmonton earlier this month. The throne speech did not explain exactly what Quanto's Law will be. The government also says it plans to introduce a new cyber-bullying law, keep the most dangerous criminals behind bars for life, reduce wireless roaming costs, and require television channels to be unbundled by cable companies. The speech from the throne opens a new session of parliament.	0:09
Story 2	It went down almost to the deadline, but a last-minute agreement was reached in the U.S. Congress Wednesday to avoid a debt default and reopen the government after a 16-day shutdown. The deal means the U.S. government will be allowed to keep borrowing money and be open at least until early in 2014. Without this agreement the U.S. government may not have been able to pay its bills. Republican demands for the de-funding of the health care law known as Obamacare were not successful; this agreement makes only one small change to the program.	0:57
Story 3	After a long day at work, some of us get too tired to cook... so we eat out. But that's not helping the approximately 50% of Albertans who are obese or overweight. The Ontario government is taking its own steps to encourage healthy eating. Last week, it promised to introduce legislation requiring chain restaurants to post calories on their menus. A University of Alberta nutritional researcher says a calorie counter would change the way we eat out for the better. She says it would help us understand how much we should be eating everyday. But so far, the Alberta government says it has no plans to introduce the same legislation here.	01:44

Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary

Answer	Word from the story	Related words
d	1) federal	a) perfectly in detail
g	2) in honour	b) mistreatment online online teasing
a	3) exactly	c) must demand
b	4) cyber-bullying	d) central for the whole country
f	5) reduce	e) sold separately not packaged together
c	6) require	f) decrease make less
e	7) unbundled	g) to show respect to remember

Listening

1. __T__   The government is planning new laws to protect animals that work with police.
2. __F__   "Quanto's law" was named after the police dog killed in Edmonton in **September**.
3. __F__   The speech from the throne was on **Tuesday**.
4. __T__ The government also wants to introduce a law about cyber-bullying.
5. __F__ The speech mentioned requiring cable companies to **bundle** their TV channels.
6. __T__   A new session of parliament begins with the speech from the throne.

News story 2

Vocabulary

1. The _deadline_ to hand in my homework assignment is Friday at noon.
2. I try to _avoid_ doing homework on the weekend, so I do all my work on Friday afternoon.
3. Last month, my sister had to _borrow_ money from me to pay an unexpected bill. She paid back her _debt_ to me after she got her pay cheque.
4. Many university programs have been _de-funded_ by the Alberta government.
5. If you _default_ on your loan or bills, the company will charge you interest.
6. We made an _agreement_ to meet at the mall at noon.
7. A government listens to the _demands_ of the people and then decides what is possible to do.

Listening

1. An agreement was reached in the U.S. Congress Wednesday, right before the _____.	<mark>a) deadline.</mark> b) the government shutdown.
2. Because of the agreement, a debt default was avoided and the U.S. government _____.	a) shutdown for 16 days. <mark>b) reopened after a 16-day shutdown.</mark>
3. The agreement means the U.S. government will be allowed to _____.	a) avoid borrowing money. <mark>b) keep borrowing money.</mark>
4. Without this agreement the U.S. government would not be able to _____.	<mark>a) pay its bills.</mark> b) pay for Obamacare.
5. The U.S. government will remain open at least until _____.	<mark>a) early in 2014.</mark> b) another agreement is reached.
6. The Republicans wanted funding to Obamacare to be_____, but they failed.	a) continued <mark>b) stopped</mark>

News story 3

Vocabulary

Answer	Word	Definition
c	1. eat out	a) laws in a province or the country
d	2. obese	b) a group of related stores or restaurants, usually with the same name in many places
f	3. overweight	c) eat in a restaurant
a	4. legislation	d) when a person is heavy enough to have negative health problems
b	5. chain	e) show a public piece of information
e	6. post	f) when a person is above the normal weight
g	7. calories	g) the amount of energy food produces in the human body

Listening

1. What reason does the newsreader give as to why many people eat out? People are too tired to cook
2. What percentage of Albertans is overweight or obese? 50%
3. Which provincial government is bringing in new laws to make chain restaurants put the amount of calories in a meal on the menu? Ontario
4. Why might putting calories on menus help consumers? Make them more aware of how much they need to eat
5. When is the government of Alberta planning to bring in similar changes? It has no plans to do this.